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*The Duty of Subjects to their Prince, set forth
and inforced;*

I N A
DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED

In the Parish Church of *Newbury*;

On Sunday, November 2, 1760.

On Occasion of the happy Accession of his present
Majesty King GEORGE III. to the Throne of
these Realms.

By *THOMAS PENROSE*, M.A. K
Rector of *Newbury*.

L O N D O N :

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DISCOURSE, &c.

TITUS, iii. 1.

Put them in mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers; to obey Magistrates; and to be ready to every good Work.

THESE Words are Part of an Apostolical Charge, to one who was placed over the Church of *Crete*: — In which he is required to inculcate upon his Flock the great and ne-

cessary Points of Allegiance, Submission, and Fidelity, to their civil Governors and Rulers; and to make them exemplary, — as in their Duty to God, — so also in their Duty to their Prince.

But the Exhortation was not so confined to *Titus*, but that *all* future Ministers of the Gospel are included in it. And it is certainly a very necessary, and a very important Part of their Office, to persuade their Hearers to a quiet and peaceable Submission to the Government under which they live : For *the Powers that be*, saith the Apostle, *are ordained of God.* *Rom. xiii. 1.*

It is indeed both unseemly and improper, that the Messengers of Christ should be the Heralds of a Party ; and that our Pulpits should eccho with the Mysteries of Politics, and the Encomiums of a Faction. — But to impress upon our Auditors, a faithful and conscientious Re-
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gard to the Ordinances of lawful Authority ; — to inspire them with a Love and Veneration for a good Prince ; — to raise in them Sentiments of Respect and Homage to the Throne ; — and to endeavour to make them good *Subjects*, as well as good *Men* : — This, I conceive, is so essentially incumbent on the Ministers of Religion, that there are Times and Occasions, when they cannot either properly or innocently omit it. — And such is the present. —

God Almighty hath been pleased to take to himself our late most excellent and gracious Sovereign : — A Prince, endeared to us by every Tie, — by every tender Connexion ; — endeared to us by his inviolable and sacred Regard to the Constitution of our Country, — by his wise and faithful Administration of Justice, — By the Sweetness and Lenity of his natural Disposition, — by the Successes attending

tending his Arms,—by the Length of his
Reign,—by his many personal Virtues,—
And even by his declining Years.

Under a Loss, — so peculiarly afflicting
in the present Crisis of our Affairs,—it is
the Duty of every faithful Pastor, to exhort
his respective Charge to turn their Eyes,
and to transfer their Affections to his royal
Successor : — And to beseech Almighty
God, *by whom Kings reign*, to take him
into his heavenly Keeping, — to give him
Wisdom for the governing these united
Kingdoms, — to support him under the
Cares of his important Charge, — to pre-
serve him from the Temptations incident
to such exalted Stations ; — and to make
his Example as bright, his Life as ex-
tended, and his Successes as numerous,
as those of his illustrious Predecessor !

Suffer me therefore, my Brethren, on
this Occasion, to *put you in mind to be*
subject

subject to Principalities and Powers : That is, — To shew your Fidelity, — your most conscientious Fidelity, — to that amiable and excellent Prince, on whom the Imperial Crown of these Kingdoms is now devolved.

I. And First, I would press this upon you as a Duty most solemnly enjoined in our holy Religion.

For when our Lord Jesus Christ came down upon Earth, his Design was not to subvert, or even in the least Tittle to alter, the Constitutions of civil Polity, which were then subsisting in the World : Nor doth it appear to be his Intention, that any one in future ages, under the Pretence of promoting his Religion, should break in upon the established Forms of Government, and violate the Decrees of lawful Authority. — His Application was to
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the Hearts and Consciences of Men ; — the Mind, and not the Body, was the Object of his Empire. As for the various Systems of political Government ; these he suffered to remain on their ancient Foundations, and to continue in the Exercise of their respective Jurisdictions.

Nay, so far was he from seeking a *Kingdom in this World* ; John xviii. 36. So far was he from being a Disturber of the publick Peace ; that on the contrary, he submitted with the most visible Complacency to *the Powers that were*. He revered their Authority : He acquiesced in their Laws. And being once destitute of the Means to discharge his Proportion of a certain Tribute, from which, as being the Son of God, he might have pleaded an Exemption, he wrought a Miracle, to furnish *Peter* with a Sum sufficient to satisfy the Demand. *Matt. xvii, 26, 27.*

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At another Time, when the insidious *Herodians* were sent out to ensnare him, and to put his Loyalty to the Test ; he gave the noblest Decision to their artful Question, and put their temporal as well as their religious Obedience on its true Foundation : *Render unto Cæsar*, said he, *the Things that are Cæsar's ; and unto God the Things that are God's*, Matt. xxii. 21.

The same Doctrine was enforced, and the same Example was shewn, by the Apostles and first Preachers of the Gospel. And though the Rulers of the various Nations, where the Seeds of Christianity were planted, were at that time Heathens ; and of consequence were Enemies to the true Religion ; yet the Christian Profelytes in every Country were most strictly charged to pay them their accustomed Homage.

Some of the *Jewish Zealots*, indeed, pleaded for an Exemption from the Re-

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straints of Authority ; and endeavoured to propagate an Opinion, that as *They* were God's peculiar People, and were under a particular Theocracy, they were therefore discharged from all Obedience to the *Roman Emperor*, to whom their Nation was then in Subjection ; and that it was a Dishonour to them to pay any Respect to the *Procurators*, or provincial Governours, that were sent from *Rome*.

To obviate the Progress of this Opinion, and to prevent it from spreading among his Christians, St. Paul writes thus : *Let every Soul be subject unto the higher Powers*, Rom. xiii. 1. " Let every Man, of every
 " Name and Character, be obedient to the
 " legislative Power of his Country :—For
 " Religion, — whether of *Moses* or of
 " Christ, — was not intended to make the
 " Duty of Subjects to their Princes void ;
 " nor to cancel and evacuate the Obligation,
 " which Men of all Persuasions owe to
 " the Institutions of lawful Authority."

And

And he lays the Foundation of this Obedience in the Sacredness of Power : *For there is no Power, says he, but of God, Rom. xiii. 1.* That is, “The supreme
 “ Magistrate, though not indeed immediately appointed by express Revelation,
 “ yet acts under the Authority of a divine
 “ Sanction; and derives his Power from
 “ the great eternal Fountain of all Power,
 “ —God Almighty himself.”——Therefore he lays it down as a Position ever to be attended to ; *Ye must needs be subject, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake : For they are God's Ministers, Rom. xiii. 5, 6.*

And writing to *Timothy* upon the same Subject, he hath these memorable Words ; *I exhort, that, first of all, Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of Thanks, be made for all Men : For Kings, and for all that are in Authority ; that we lead a*

quiet and peaceable Life, in all Godliness and Honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the Sight of God our Saviour, 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2, 3.

This is St. *Paul's* Reasoning; and these his Instructions. — And St. *Peter's* Doctrine is exactly of the same Import: *Submit yourselves to every Ordinance of Man*, saith that Apostle, *for the Lord's sake*, 1 Pet. ii. 13. 17. That is, “Con-
sider those who are placed over you
as intitled to your Subjection and Fide-
lity; for they are the Guardians of the
publick Peace and Welfare: — They
are appointed to superintend and secure
the Rights and Properties of the People
committed to their Charge. And there-
fore it is the Will of God, that you
should reverence, respect, and love
them; and should endeavour to live peace-
able and quiet Lives under their Admi-
nistration. — For Christianity makes no
Al-

“ Alteration in the civil Customs and Li-
 “ berties of Mankind; it concerns not itself
 “ with the Forms and Names of Govern-
 “ ment; but leaves them unmolested and
 “ undisturbed as it found them. It is in-
 “ deed its Design *to deliver Men from the*
 “ *Bondage of Corruption*, from the Yoke
 “ and Servitude of Sin, *into the glorious*
 “ *Liberty of the Children of God*, Rom.
 “ viii. 21. But as for the just Restraints
 “ of lawful Power, these it suffers to operate
 “ in their full Force; or rather it strength-
 “ ens and confirms them, by requiring
 “ Men, from a Principle of Duty to God,
 “ to be gentle and peaceable in all Con-
 “ ditions, under all States, and to all
 “ their Superiours of every kind.”

In Conformity to this Doctrine, St.
Jude stigmatizes the false Teachers of his
 Days, as Enemies to the good Order and
 Harmony of Society: *These filthy Dreamers*,
 says he, *despise Dominion, and speak evil of*
Dignities,

Dignities, ver. 8. From whence it is plain, that, in the Judgment of this Apostle, a seditious and mutinous Spirit is not the true Spirit of the Gospel; and that nothing can be more contradictory to the Character of a good Christian, than to *speakevil of the Ruler of the People.*

So that, if we may rely on these Authorities, — and these are the most sacred we can appeal to, — it is certain that a Christian is bound by his Religion, not only to refrain from all Rancour, Acrimony, and Opposition against his lawful Prince; but also to be a good Subject upon Principle, and *for Conscience sake.*

For it would be a most strange Paradox indeed, if he, who by his Religion, and in Conformity to his Faith, is to *love all Men, yea even his very Enemies*, — and to *live peaceably with all Men*, — was yet at Liberty to be an Enemy to the Throne;
to

— to vilify the Person, and to oppose the Authority, of his Prince.

The Truth is, that the Gospel requires its Followers, most conscientiously to render to all their respective Dues ; — Custom to whom Custom is due, Fear to whom Fear, and Honour to whom Honour, Rom. xiii. 7.

And therefore I would intreat you, my Brethren, on the present Occasion, to consider, with proper Attention, this Argument drawn from our holy Religion ; and to shew yourselves good Christians, — as by other Proofs, — so also by the Chearfulness, the Sincerity, and Constancy of your Obedience to the King.

II. To which I am desirous to add, Secondly, as another Motive of great Weight. That the Circumstances of our Submission are more favourable, easy, and rational,

rational, than any other Country is blest with.

The first Christians, you have heard, were required to live contented under whatever Forms or Kinds of Government the Providence of God had placed them;—some of which, we know, were tyrannical and oppressive to a very great Degree. And in many of our neighbouring Nations at this Day, the Yoke of Power is very heavy on the Subjects Necks: They hold their Lives and their Properties by a very precarious Tenure; and their Condition,—to speak truly of it,—is but a milder Degree of Slavery.

But it is *our* Happiness, my Brethren, to have such a Constitution of Government established among us, as every wise Man would wish to be born under:—A Constitution, the Fruit of much Wisdom, the Effect of much Attention, the
Result

Result of long Debates, and mature Consideration.—It is our Happiness to be *protected*, not *oppressed*, by the supreme Authority ;—to be exempted from the Invasions of Tyranny, and the capricious Impositions of arbitrary Power ;—to be *free*, without *Dissoluteness* ; and to enjoy the *Liberty* of Men, while we are under the just Restraints and *Controul* of Authority.—It is our Happiness to have our Lives and our Properties guarded by the most sacred Fences, by the best and wisest Laws ; and we can look round on our Possessions, with the pleasing Reflection that they are secured from the Incroachments of Violence, and that they are truly and properly *our own*.——In one Word ; Power and Authority are *here* in their most inviting Forms ; — awful, without Terror ; — solemn, and yet benign. And the Government of our Country is so excellently adapted to Mens natural Rights and Privileges, that it is the Admiration

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of all around us: — The Admiration, I had almost said the Envy, of all *Europe*; as well as the Boast of *Britons*.

What then can be more seasonable, at this Juncture, than to call upon you, by the Love you bear to your Country, to be faithful in your Obedience to HIM, who is now invested with the supreme Authority, and with the Guardianship of those Laws by which your Liberty is secured?

And here, at the same Time, I cannot, I must not, omit to remind you, on this Occasion, of the steady Adherence, of the undeviating Regard, which our late departed Sovereign ever expressed, and ever testified, both to the religious and civil Constitution of these Kingdoms. — It cannot be said by the most inveterate Opposition (if there is any such existing among us) that he ever injured the Liberty of his Subjects, even in the minutest Instance.

stance. — On the contrary ; we have been convinced by the Experience of many Years, that the Laws of the Realm were the unvarying Laws of his Conduct ; that his own Happiness consisted in making his People happy ; and that he esteemed it his greatest Glory, that he was the King of free Men.

View him in the various Parts of his Reign ; — a Reign providentially protracted beyond the usual Period ; — and you see such constant Attention to the Prosperity and Welfare of his Dominions, — such a strict Observance of Justice, softened with Gentleness, and sweetened with Humanity, — such a religious Regard to the Laws, — such true Patriotism, — and such a sincere Zeal for the publick Glory ; — that he may most properly and emphatically be said to have been *THE FATHER OF HIS PEOPLE* ; — as

well for the Tenderness of his Inclinations, as for the Number of his Years.

History affords no Instance of a milder or a juster Reign. — And it would be hard to find one, among all our Princes, to whom these Nations are more indebted, both for internal Peace at Home, and for military Glory and Conquest abroad, than to our late most lamented Sovereign. — His Memory must be dear to his grateful Subjects; and the impartial Pen will rank him among the most illustrious of our Monarchs.

But as it hath pleased Almighty God to dissolve the Tie between that great Prince and us, and to call him to the Glories of a far brighter Kingdom : — Let me *put you in Remembrance*, that your Allegiance, your Veneration, and your Love, are now due to his Royal Successor; — from whose blooming Years, — from whose

whose religious Education, — from whose known Virtues, and princely Endowments, we may, with good Grounds, hope for a long, and wise, and happy Administration of Equity and Justice among us. — Every Circumstance conspires to make us unanimous in Heart and Voice ; and to fill us with the pleasing Hope, that Religion, — not the *Form*, but the real *Power* and Spirit of it, — together with good Morality, and all the social Virtues, will daily flourish more and more in these Kingdoms.

Let us therefore, my Brethren, — each of us in our respective Stations, and according to our several Abilities ; — let us endeavour on all Occasions to testify in our own Conduct, and to promote among others, the most firm and steady Principles of Loyalty to our gracious and beloved Sovereign. — Let us shew ourselves to be true Friends to Liberty, by
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the Warmth of our Affections, and the Sincerity of our Attachment to *HIM*, who is the supreme Guardian of our Freedom, and of all that is dear and valuable to us. — Let us remember what we owe to his illustrious Predecessor : Let us remember what we hope for from his own Wisdom, Piety, and Virtue : And let us so demean ourselves in Peace, and Quietness, and good Order, that he may be a great and happy Prince, and we a flourishing and happy People.

To conclude all : — Let us beg of God Almighty, who is *the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, to give our Sovereign *a wise and an understanding Heart* ; — to conduct and prosper all his Undertakings for the publick Good ; and to bless him with Length of Days, and an Increase of Happiness ! — And may we, and all his Subjects, be faithful and constant in our Obedience to him : — May we be
ready,

ready, in every Time and Place, to testify our Veneration for his Person; our Zeal for his Glory; our Subjection to his Government; — Ever remembering, that the same sacred Authority, which hath commanded us to *fear God*, hath likewise commanded us to *honour the King*, Matt. xxii. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 17.

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